852 cut and the nose, ears, and lower lip are pierced if the child was too weak to have it done when he was very small.

852 When the boys are fairly large they eat with their fathers, and the girls eat with their mothers. The parents teach them no sort of manners and they say neither good morning, good evening, nor thank you. They are brought up in such liberty that they do only what they want, obeying their parents at their whim. The parents do not punish them. The mothers mistreat them sometimes but only in a fury or when vexed, and not to correct them.

881 When the girls begin to menstruate, they are made to fast one or two months. So are the boys when they attain their adolescence, and they are slashed with agouti teeth, as we shall indicate when we discuss their drinking parties.

768 When the father dies or leaves his wife all the children stay with
586 the mother and she takes care of them, while the husband does not bother about them any more.

548 There are women among the Caribs who become prostitutes. There
834 are no indecent words among them. Young and old, boys and girls, all call things by their names without any shame whatsoever.

## CHAPTER VII

### The Huts, Beds, and Pirogues of The Caribs

361 Since they have many enemies who often kidnap them, the Caribs live at Capesterre because there the approach is more difficult and more rarely leeward of the wind for the anchorage of the boats by which they fear being surprised.

621 They are divided into families, and these families are composed of several households which live to gether and form a sort of hamlet under the father of the family. The father's sons and daughters are
342 married and live in their own huts. They first make a large common hall [627] 60, 80, or 100 feet long, more or less, which they call a carbet. Around this large hut they build small ones for individual families.

These huts are made with forked branches stuck in the ground, joined with other pieces of wood which go from one fork to another.

## 5. Settlements and Boats

361 The Caribs have only a very small clearing at the place where they live, which is a place for the carbet and some smaller houses around it. This is planned so that the Europeans will not be able to know about them or capture them by surprise. It is for the same reason that the greater part of them are established on the windward side of the island, because here the waves are rough and terrain is high and it is difficult to gain access to it. Nevertheless, they are always near rivers because they would not be able to forego water either for drinking or for bathing. [279] There is a yard between the carbet and the other houses. Each one cleans the area of it in front of his own house. After supper they gather and talk around the fire, which they make if the evening is cool, until they say to each other "let us go in and sleep." On the next day they do not complain about the evening dew and they have not caught colds. [85] They [364] take away fishbones, peels, and their refuse from the tables, and throw them far away, because such things breed chiggers. [303]

344 "We have to wrap cassava in thick leaves in the middle of the carbet." The carbet is the room, market place, work shop, storage place, dining hall, and dormitory, and the community house of the Caribs. It is almost like an oval cradle. Its height [sic] is sixty feet and its width is twenty feet. It is built plainly, but with all the care and utility one might imagine. The entrances are toward the center of the house, and are four diametrically opposed holes. These entrance holes are only four feet high. There are no other doors or windows, and there are no pegs or nails. There is only one storey and no chambers. There are no divisions nor hindrances inside the carbet which would impede 12 people walking side by side in a row. At the height of 7 feet there are beams 10 feet long to hang 100 to 120 cotton [513] hammocks, where the Caribs rest peacefully in perfect harmony without quarrels or noise. Women rarely enter this house except to serve the men. [476]

342 The Caribs have thatched houses (mánna) built a little like those of our peasants except that the roof is made of the upper part of reeds or of palmetto leaves which extend to the ground. They are oval in shape and lack windows entirely. In place of a door there is only a

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)



methods of planting and of preparation as the *Arawak*. The kitchen utensils, however, were more varied. The *Carib* made their graters from coral, from thorny branches, or by inserting wood or stone splinters in a plank. They removed the juice in a cylindrical basketry strainer (pl. 94), hung with a weight from a tree; sifted the flour in a basketry sieve; and baked the cake on either a stone or a clay griddle with the aid of a wooden spatula. [241] 415

Corn, sweetpotatoes, yams, beans, and peppers also were cultivated, the corn being made into bread as among the *Arawak*. The sweetpotato and the yam were particularly important; they were planted as cuttings after a rain. When full grown the tubers were roasted or boiled and eaten with a sauce like that made for meat. The roots and leaves were used as a seasoning. 24 252

The *Carib* ate fruits of various kinds, including the banana (post-Conquest), the plantain, the guayba, the papaya, and the pineapple. Bananas were cooked in sugared water; both they and the other fruits were also pounded in a mortar to make a thick paste. Sugarcane, acquired from the Spaniards, was boiled in water or was chewed fresh, and honey was mixed with water to make a drink. 252

**Eating.**—Except for the morning meal taken soon after fixing their hair and bodies, the *Carib* ate irregularly. Men sat on low stools in the carbet (men's house) and were served by women on little tables (matoutou), covered with leaves. Later the women ate by themselves in the kitchen. 264

## VILLAGES AND HOUSES

**Settlements.**—*Carib* villages were located in the areas least favorable for surprise attacks by the enemy, being usually on the windward side of the island and in an open space upon a rise in the land. Each village was near a stream, which provided drinking water and was used daily for bathing. The villages were moved frequently, after a death, sickness, or some other disagreeable incident. Each was small; it consisted of a carbet (men's house), various smaller houses for the women, and several storage platforms. These structures were arranged irregularly around a small plaza where the people were accustomed to sit by the light of a fire at night. 361

**Houses.**—The carbet (taboüi) was an oval building, which later became rectangular, about 60 feet (18 m.) long and 20 feet (6 m.) wide. To construct it the *Carib* set into the ground forked posts 10 feet (3 m.) high and lashed across beams to the tops of these posts. They laid on poles, extending from the ground at one end to the peak of the house at the other; bound other poles horizontally over the first set; and thatched the whole down to the ground with palm leaves. The floor was of dirt and had a hearth in the center. There were no partitions; the only openings were a door no more than 4 feet (1.2 m.) high in the middle of each side and end. 342

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13



the reserve. The upshot of this episode was the discontinuance of the office of chief. The following gleanings, gathered during my often hasty visits to the reserve, half a century after those of Ober, represent fairly well what remains of the Carib language and culture.

## Descriptive and Physical

The present Carib Reserve extends along some 8 miles of rugged, irregular coastline in the middle of Dominica's windward side. A series of rocky streams flow from the hills and enter the sea by way of deep wooded ravines and small inlets 2 to 3 miles apart. After a few hours' tropical downpour, they "come down," to use a local expression, changing for the time being into roaring and impassable torrents. Between, rounded shoulders or spurs rise 200 or 300 feet above the shore, and run back up to a central mountain ridge some 3 miles distant from and 2,000 feet above the Atlantic. From here, the land falls sharply in woodland and provision grounds to the valley of the Pegoua River, which forms the inland or western boundary of the reserve (fig. 11).

In all, there may be upward of 3,000 acres, but not more than a tenth of this is capable of any sort of cultivation, by far the greater part being nothing but rock and tuff. A good wide bridle path of red clay, extremely slippery in wet weather, winds in and out near the coast, up and down the steep sides of the intervening spurs. The Caribs' dwellings, though usually well hidden by trees and shrub, are seldom far away from this road. There are but two settlements: one, Bataka, being 15 minutes' climb from Kuària (or Big River), the northern boundary; the other, St. Cyr, adjoining the road high above the Salybia River. Elsewhere their dwellings are scattered along the hillsides or in the ravines, wherever their owners' fancy or convenience has placed them, some close together, others more than half a mile from their neighbor.

Disease, malnutrition, and miscegenation—results of the American Indian's unfortunate but very real inadaptability to social and economic conditions other than his own—have reduced the tribe to about 400 souls, of whom less than a quarter are entirely free from negro blood.

Physically, the Caribs of Dominica (the product of a cross between the fierce Carib invader and the docile Arawak Islander in pre-Columbian days) are a small though sturdy people, the men averaging around 5 feet 3 inches and the women about 5 feet. I have seen a few decided dolichocephals, even among the purer types, though the latter are usually subbrachycephalic (especially the women), with an index of between 79 and 81. They have straight black hair of coarse texture, which acquires in some a reddish tint through exposure to the sun's rays. Their foreheads are high and broad, their cheekbones

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13



241 stumps. Partly as a protection against the depredations of domestic
[331] animals (hens, pigs, goats, cows) and partly because, under primitive methods of culture, the ground becomes exhausted and a new garden must be made every 2 or 3 years, the provision grounds are for the
[361] most part situated beyond the coastal hill crest on the slopes of the Pegoua Valley, some miles distant from the homes of their owners. Practically the only implements of culture used today are the cutlass (machete) and the digging stick—a strong, sharp-pointed stick popularly known as "lochette" (Carib: koyéré).

241 Manioc (*Manihot utilissima*) still forms the principal crop, although
824 its importance as a staple diet has diminished in the last half century. Several varieties are known and distinguished by the following local appellations: manioc noir (the commonest), m. blanc, m. violet, m. bleu, m. beurre, m. 100 livres, m. doux, camanioc. The last two are nonpoisonous and may be eaten as vegetables. Manioc is planted by cuttings—usually by groups of three to one pit—and takes from 1 year to 18 months to reach maturity. The process of farine and cassava making is described elsewhere.

Next to manioc, the most important tubers cultivated are: chou (*Xantosoma saggitifolium* Sch., malanga, tannia, taya) of various species, varieties of yam (*Dioscorea alata, pilosiuscula, multiflora, Cayennensis, trifida, tuberosa*—blanc and de l'eau, bâtard, marron, à piquants noirs, couch-couche, yam bonda, etc.), of sweet potato (red, yellow, white), of *Maranta* (red, white), *Solanum*, and *Cipura*. Squash and Indian corn are also grown, but do not form a staple food, as with the Indians of central and southern North America. The latter is never ground into flour, but is roasted and eaten whole, rather after the manner of a delicacy or sweetmeat. Bananas, plantains, and breadfruit (*Artocarpus*) of the ordinary and of the "chestnut" (*seminifera*) varieties are grown and eaten extensively. Various fruit trees and other utilitarian trees and bushes are cultivated around and near the houses. Such are: cotton,[1] coffee, cocoa, palma Christi or castor-oil plant, roucou (*Bixa orellana*), calabash (*Crescentia cujete*), guava, mango, sugarcane, papaya, various species of *anona* (*muricata, reticulata, squamosa*—corossol, cachiman, pomme canelle, etc.), and la pitte or silk grass (*Bromelia* sp.) for the making of twine and fishing lines, *Phyllanthus conami* or "nivrage" for fish poisoning, Malvinia or "soap bush," sapodilla, and pineapples (of which several small species grow wild in the woods).

241 The clearing of the land is done by the men, the rest of the work (planting, weeding, digging, and gathering) being divided among both sexes largely according to individual taste or family arrangement.

[1] Two varieties—so-called black and white, according to leaf-stem color. The former is esteemed better.

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13



In the Island of St. John are some rocks covered with incised figures, which are called the "Carib rocks,"—rude petroglyphs without meaning; but undoubtedly of aboriginal origin. Throughout the Greater Antilles, I cannot recall any of these petroglyphs, and they seem to be peculiar to the Carib area, other and finer ones being found in the island of St. Vincent. The descendants of the Caribs to-day are confined to two islands only, Dominica (which was the first land sighted by Columbus on his second voyage) and St. Vincent, the former between latitude fifteen and sixteen north, and the latter in latitude thirteen. They are described in my book on these islands,[1] published fifteen years ago, and I will not repeat my descriptions, except to state that there are some twenty families of pure blood remaining in Dominica, and perhaps half a dozen in St. Vincent. There may be three hundred in each island, but so intimately mixed with the negroes that their distinguishing features are nearly obliterated. They dwell on the windward or eastern coast of either island, in each having a portion of land assigned them, which they cultivate in common, or which, at least, is not owned in severalty. They subsist upon the fruits of their agricultural labors and the sea, eked out with the scant products of the chase, consisting mainly of small birds, agoutis, and iguanas. Their huts are almost as primitive as at the time of discovery, being constructed of palm logs and thatched with palm leaves. In Dominica most of them speak the French patois (a legacy from the former owners of the island), and in St. Vincent, English; being Catholics in the former and Church of England in the latter, as to their religious faith. All vestiges of their native religion have apparently disappeared, although they still have a belief in the jumbies and wood-spirits of the negroes. They are to-day gentle and easily managed, showing no trace of the warlike spirit of their ancestors; in shape they are robust, well-formed, with

[1] See "Camps in the Caribbees," by F. A. Ober. Boston, 1879.

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13



The Indians of Guiana to-day, says a very thorough investigator, who published the results of his researches ten years ago,[1] are divided into four branches, as the Warrau, Arawak, Wapiana, and the Carib. "The languages of these four branches are quite distinct from each other; and within the language are dialectic variations. . . . A stranger finds it difficult to distinguish, merely from appearances, the different members of the respective tribes. . . . The Arawaks are slightly taller than the Warraus; their bodies, though short and broad, are far better proportioned; skin lighter in color; expression of face brighter and more intelligent. . . . They are the most cleanly of all the Indians. . . . The Caribs are darker; somewhat taller than the Arawaks, bodies better built; having, in appearance and in reality, far greater strength; features coarser, with the appearance of greater power. . . . There is a constant enmity between Caribs and Arawaks. The Arawaks to this day retain a timid dread of the Caribs, who repay the feeling with contempt. . . . The Caribs are the most warlike of all, especially the pure Caribs. . . . They are peculiar among the tribes, in that they occupy no particular district, but are scattered more or less thickly throughout the country. . . . They are the great pottery-makers. . . . The Caribs seem to represent migrations into the country already occupied by the other tribes, and may be contradistinguished as natives and stranger tribes; the three branches of natives being all united by a common feeling of aversion to the Caribs, or strangers. . . . The natives all make their hammocks of the fiber of a palm (*Mauritia flexuosa*) while the Caribs make theirs of cotton. . . . The fact that the true, or island Caribs, had two vocabularies, one used by the men, and the other by the women, has long been known." Humboldt alludes to this difference of speech, and it is mentioned in my "Campa in

[1] "Among the Indians of Guiana," by E. F. Im Thurn. London, 1883.